Message Text

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2.1

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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USIA-06 /067 W

----- 092321

R 190830Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1774

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

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ROME FOR ILLING

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, VT SUBJ: CONCORDAT REVISED

REFS: (A) LISBON 505 (NOTAL)

- (B) LISBON A-19
- (C) LISBON 3364, AUG. 8, 1974
- (D) ROME 1065

SUMMARY: GOP HAS SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATED AND SIGNED PROTOCOL REVISING CONCORDAT. REVISION WILL ELIMINATE SOCIAL-RELIGOUS ISSUE OF DIVORCE AND SHOULD IMPROVE POPULAR IMAGE OF CHURCH IN PORTUGAL. END SUMMARY.

- 1. JUSTICE MINISTER SALGADO ZENHA SIGNED IN ROME FEB. 15 A PROTOCOL REVISING MAY 1940 CONCORDAT. CONCORDAT REVISION INVOLVED ONLY THE ARTICLE CONCERNING DIVORCE.
- $2.\ SALGADO$ ZENHA NOTED THAT RAPID 3 MONTH NEGOTIATION PERIOD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTRASTED WITH "LABORIOUS" ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS ITLY AND SPAIN

HAVING WITH VATICAN FOR CONCORDAT REVISION.

- 3. PROTOCOL SIGNATURE WILL NOT MARK END OF PROCESS, AS JURIDICALLY PROTOCOL IS CONSIDERED TREATY WHICH MUST BE FORMALLY RATIFIED. FORMALITIES SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY MARCH. AN ESTIMATED 300,000 PORTUGUESE WILL THEN BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR DIVORCE, ALTHOUGH FAR GREATER NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS INDIRECTLY AFFECTED.
- 4. COMMENT: CONCORDAT REVISION IS PRODUCT OF MUTUAL INTEREST ON PART OF GOP AND VATICAN TO ELIMINATE DIVORCE QUESTION AS POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE POLITICAL ISSUE (REFS). CHURCH'S COOPERATION WITH GOP IN LEGALIZING DIVORCE WILL REMOVE SINGLE MOST EMBARRASSING CROSS IT HAS HAD TO CARRY IN DEALING WITH THAT PORTION OF PORTUGUESE POPULATION TRADITIONALLY LOYAL TO CATHOLIC FAITH.

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